

of a flask containing salt-solution and of similar objects into a work on gynecology? L. E.

which already contains so many notable contributions from American writers.

H. E. A

**"Pellagra—History, Distribution, Diagnosis, Prognosis, Treatment, Etiology."** By Stewart R. Roberts, S. M., M. D. C. V. Mosby Co., St. Louis. \$2.50.

This volume attempts to consider the subject of "Pellagra" in a rather complete manner. The illustrations are numerous and excellent. The arrangement of the text is rather unconventional, beginning by devoting a page to the pronunciation of the word pellagra, taking up next a description of cases of the disease, and then giving its definition and general description. The author next furnishes a quite complete chapter on "history and geographical distribution" and in this chapter appears to show evidence of more than ordinary familiarity with previous authors, but at the same time leaves this part defective in the absence of references to bibliography. Throughout the book terseness of expression is wanting and in places a whole page might be reduced to a short paragraph without loss of information. In addition to this verbosity there are parts of the book where the style of English is so poor as to suggest hurried proof reading; for example, "She has always lived within one hundred yards of a branch and half a mile of a creek all her life and has eaten cornbread in the usual amounts."

In his consideration of the symptomatology, pathology and diagnosis of the disease, the author shows that he has a thorough knowledge of his subject and is moreover probably a keen clinical observer. When considering the several theories that have been advanced on the cause of pellagra, the author takes a very wise and judicial view, which, expressed briefly, is that we are without certain knowledge on this part of the subject.

The only unfavorable criticism of this work is the mode of its presentation; the information imparted is accurate and full.

D. H. C., M. D.

**A Treatise on Diseases of the Hair.** By George Thomas Jackson, M. D., Professor of Dermatology in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Medical Department of Columbia University, and Charles Wood McMurtry, M. D., Instructor in Dermatology in the College of Physicians and Surgeons, Medical Department of Columbia University, New York. Octavo, 366 pages, with 109 engravings and 10 colored plates. Cloth, \$3.75, net. Lea & Febiger, Philadelphia and New York, 1912.

The authors have drawn from their extensive experience and from all the literature on the subject in writing this instructive and practical book. In the preface they announce their intention to place before their readers "all that is known about the diseases of the hair and scalp." They have succeeded in doing so in an interesting and concise manner within 366 pages. The volume is illustrated with many excellent photographs taken from the authors' clinic and from other writers. It contains also many excellent plates from microphotographs illustrating various pathological conditions. There are some few color plates which are so very good that it is a matter of regret that there are not more of them. The black and white illustrations are quite good however. The chapters on ringworm of the scalp are particularly comprehensive. They are based largely on Sabouraud's great work. The senior author, whose valuable work in dermatology for many years is so well known, has given to the book that character which has made his other writings so popular. The sections on anatomy, etiology, pathology, and bacteriology have been handled ably by the junior author. The book is a valuable addition to dermatological literature

**"Principle and Practice of Medicine."** By Sir William Osler, Bt., M. D., F. R. S. Published by D. Appleton & Co., New York and London, 1912.

Appearing in conjunction with the texts of Strumpell and Dieulafoy, the eighth edition of Osler's Practice is at hand. It would indeed seem a task both needless and presumptuous to offer a review of a work so widely known were it not that this, the eighth revision in twenty years, shows probably the greatest individual number of changes. In reading one experiences a pleasure as of meeting old friends, for the "personal" part is little changed. It is this foundation of the book, the expression of the author's own observations and opinions, that makes it a master-work and at the same time such delightful reading. It is to be hoped that no amount of future editing will change this feature that has made a text-book a classic. Of necessity many changes do occur, the ever increasing literature having been sifted by experienced hands with the proper leavening of conservatism.

Naturally the greatest alterations are found in the section on the infectious diseases since it is here that the present advances are being made. A new and more logical grouping is adopted, classification being according to the biological character of the etiological agent. In typhoid fever the plan of liberal feeding is urged, and prophylactic vaccination for those exposed, although very briefly touched upon, is recommended. In the discussion of the diagnosis of pulmonary tuberculosis there is exhibited a conservatism which if coming from any but such a master clinician might bring forth a word of question. The reviewer believes that the general profession errs oftener in neglecting to call a doubtful case tuberculous than in doing the opposite. Timely emphasis is laid upon the non-bacterial fungus infections about which there is so much at present being written. In the section on malaria we find again that misstatement that "malaria is rare on the Pacific Coast," although from the excellent eradication efforts being put forth in this state it may not be necessary to amend this in future editions. Syphilis comes in for a generous share of revision, salvarsan and the luetin reaction being considered. Regarding the infections of doubtful etiology, the recent work on poliomyelitis is reviewed, Brill's disease is assumed to be sporadic typhus, and sections on acute tonsillitis and acute coryza added.

Beriberi and pellagra are classed as intoxications rather than infections and the maize theory of the etiology of the latter emphasized. The term "diseases of metabolism" is more happily substituted for "constitutional diseases" of previous editions. It is notable that arthritis deformans is no longer considered here but under diseases of the locomotor system, and that weight is put upon its possible infectious origin with the metabolic changes secondary. It is very pleasing to see that the term "chronic rheumatism" of the earlier texts is mentioned only to be condemned, and that "myalgia" is substituted for "muscular rheumatism." A new cut and several diagrams of pulse tracings appear with the diseases of the circulatory system. The remainder of the book is not greatly altered although one can hardly read a page through without finding some bit of revision or some reference to new work as evidences of its most careful and conscientious editing.

As regards the mechanical part of the book little more can be said than that it is quite up to the publishers' standard. A particularly welcome feature is the printing of the index in larger type than formerly. Only two typographical errors

were noted: "Violet" for "Violet" on page xxiv, and "Arnette" for "Arneth" on page 534. L. H. B.

**Digestion and Metabolism.** The Physiological and Pathological Chemistry of Nutrition. For students and physicians. By Alonzo Englebert Taylor, M. D., Rush Professor of Physiological Chemistry, University of Pennsylvania, Philadelphia. Octavo, 560 pages. Cloth, \$3.75, net. Lea & Febiger, Philadelphia and New York, 1912.

We have long been of the opinion that it is a waste of time to read the average medical book written hurriedly by a busy practitioner who repeats what has been better said before, and whose only justification for writing is that he attempts to bring the subject matter to date. Such books, even from the pens of men whom we all respect, may be woefully disappointing and lacking power to inspire thought and further study.

The very favorable reception accorded to Hewlett's translation of Krehl's book several years ago showed how eager the American clinician is to see disease from the viewpoint of the physiological chemist. We feel that we must look to them for most of the advances that medicine is to make from now on, but we have neither the time nor the technical knowledge to wade through the already enormous literature and to pick out what we need. It is this service that Dr. Taylor has so ably performed for us.

Many will decry the lack of references but the author explains that he found it impossible to emphasize here and re-ect there without entering into long and technical discussions which would have interfered with its value to the clinician. The book is more helpful to the average man because it does represent the judgment of an expert and his interpretation of the subject matter.

The book contains ten chapters on the composition of food stuffs; the theory of ferment action; digestion; carbohydrate metabolism; fat metabolism; protein metabolism; the metabolism of creatin-creatinin, and of purins; auto-intoxication; metabolism as a whole, and the relation of body heat and body temperature.

Although the book inspires one with hope for the future and suggests many avenues along which our therapeutics may advance, it also discourages by showing us our great ignorance. Is there one of us who would think for a moment of trying to adjust a Burroughs adding machine, or who would offer advice to Ehrlich when a batch of dimethyldiamidodiarsenobenzol went wrong. Yet, when on insufficient evidence we get the idea that a gouty patient's blood has become too acid, we boldly attempt to correct it. As Taylor says, (page 451) "There is in the blood no alkaline reaction to augment and no way to increase it if it were there to be increased," and he says, "It is very fortunate for us that the body maintains the blood's neutrality with great tenacity."

The following remarks could apply to many topics, "Experimentally the subject is extremely complicated, while theoretically the data at our disposal are not such as to permit us to draw even approximate conclusions." He speaks with scorn of some of our foibles. Of oxaluria he says, (page 273) "It has been widely employed as a convenient receptacle for the deposition of undiagnosed cases of illness of all kinds." Of the uric acid diathesis he says, (page 455) "It is a euphonious expression widely used for several decades as a cloak for ignorance. But just as the fashion in furs changes, so fashions in the cloak of ignorance change and the uric acid diathesis has been lately relegated to the closet for old clothes."

From habit we forbid red meat to the nephritic and gouty even after we know that there is more purin in chicken than in beef and mutton and

that the actual differences are so slight that they are not worth bothering about. It takes many years before physiology and experimental pharmacology materially change medical practice and when the physician reluctantly gives up his hobbies they are passed on to the household for another hundred years or more.

There is nothing so annoying to the average mind as a new fact, especially when it upsets cherished beliefs, but as scientific physicians we must face these things bravely.

Undoubtedly Dr. Taylor's peers will differ from him on many points but for the clinician who is studying along these lines, there is no book that we can more heartily recommend. W. C. A.

### TREATMENT OF FRACTURES.

The American Surgical Association has appointed a committee consisting of Drs. William L. Estes, South Bethlehem, Pa.; Thomas W. Huntington, San Francisco, Cal.; John B. Walker, New York City; Edward Martin, Philadelphia, and John B. Roberts, Chairman, 313 S. 17th street, Philadelphia, to report on the Operative and Non-operative of Closed and Open Fractures of the Long Bones and the value of radiography in the study of these injuries. Surgeons, who have published papers relating to this subject within the last ten years, will confer a favor by sending two reprints to the chairman of the committee. If no reprints are available, the titles and places of their publication are desired.

JOHN B. ROBERTS, Chairman,  
313 S. 17th Street, Philadelphia.

### A RESTRICTED MATERIA MEDICA.

At the recent meeting of the American Medical Association, the Section on Pharmacology and Therapeutics devoted one of its sessions to a discussion of the desirability of a restricted materia medica. Using the investigations of the A. M. A. Chemical Laboratory as evidence, W. A. Hynson pointed out that it was a physical impossibility for the pharmacist to guarantee the quality of the immense number of drugs which he is obliged to carry in stock. Discussing the question from the standpoint of the teacher, E. LeFevre emphasized the fact that it was impossible to treat in anything but a superficial manner the vast number of drugs, whose consideration is made necessary to enable the student to pass his State board examination for licensure. O. T. Osborne next treated of the more valuable drugs and took the ground that a very small number of drugs were sufficient to permit proper treatment of the conditions that demand the attention of the physician. Finally M. I. Wilbert outlined the steps which the Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry is taking in the preparation of a list of the more useful and dependable drugs, which list it is hoped teachers and examiners will take as a basis for their materia medica instruction and examination. He stated that a brief manual treatment of these drugs is in preparation and that this is to be followed by a more comprehensive work, which will provide a reliable and up-to-date treatise on the value and use of the important medicaments.

It will be generally agreed, that 90 per cent., if not 99 per cent. of the drugs described in our dispensaries are superfluous and might be eliminated with advantage and thus encourage a better knowledge of the remaining ones. All will agree that the value of medical instruction would be greatly enhanced were the courses in materia medica made thorough rather than comprehensive.

### UTAH AND NEVADA ADOPT RESOLUTIONS.

The following resolutions were adopted by the Utah State Medical Society and were then referred